UNITED
NATIONS

CRC

Convention on the
Rights of the Child

Distr.
GENERAL

CRC/C/SR.364
23 January 1997

Original: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Fourteenth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 364th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Monday, 20 January 1997, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mrs. BELEMBAOGO

CONTENTS

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF STATES PARTES (continued)

Initial report of New Zealand (continued)

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Official Records Editing Section, room E.4108, Palais des Nations, Geneva.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of the Committee at this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

GE.97-15283 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF STATES PARTIES (agenda item 4) (continued)

Initial report of New Zealand (continued) (CRC/C/28/Add.3; HRI/CORE/1/Add.33; CRC/C/Q/NZ1.1 (list of issues); written replies by the Government of New Zealand with no document symbol, in English)

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, the New Zealand delegation resumed its place at the Committee table.

2. The CHAIRPERSON invited the New Zealand delegation to reply to the questions not answered at the previous meeting.

3. Ms. ARNOLD (New Zealand) said that Te Puni Kokiri (Ministry of Maori Development) employed 267 staff members in its five branches, with a further 55 people working for the Maori Trust Office, which administered Maori land, property and client accounts. Of the staff members, 72 per cent were of Maori descent, 54.2 per cent were women and the average age was 37. The role of the Ministry was to monitor the policies of the mainstream agencies and assess their impact on the Maori population, including Maori children. The Ministry worked side by side with the mainstream agencies during the development of policies, as well as monitoring their implementation and their compliance with the Treaty of Waitangi.

4. Replying to questions regarding the current composition of Parliament, she said there were currently 30 female and 14 Maori members of Parliament, as opposed to 20 and 6 respectively the previous year.

5. Ms. GIBSON (New Zealand), replying to questions regarding privatization, said that a good proportion of the population in New Zealand had been affected by the recent changes to the economy and the public sector. It could not be denied, however, that the reforms had improved the overall economic situation by creating employment and lowering inflation and debt levels. As a result, the Government had been able to spend more on social objectives, as was shown by the current 1996/97 budget and the statement of intent by the coalition Government that such trends were likely to continue.

6. The Government had not privatized the entire public sector but had retained control of services in certain important areas such as employment and social welfare. It had spun off services in other areas where private agencies had been shown to operate more effectively. In such cases, there were adequate safeguards to ensure that the government intent was fulfilled including clear specifications, binding contracts between the subcontractors and the government agency concerned and evaluation processes. Moreover, the Government was ultimately accountable for the provision of such services. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) might also act as subcontractors. The subcontracting system had been developed to ensure the provision of adequate services.

7. As for education, the Government had stated categorically that it did not intend to privatize schools. The bulk-funding system was viewed as a means of enabling schools to take decisions affecting their work without

having to go through a central agency that was not necessarily familiar with their particular problems. A number of schools seemed perfectly happy to operate under that system. There was an ongoing evaluation process of the system, with progress reports prepared at regular intervals.

8. In reply to questions relating to the dissemination of the Convention, she said that the text of the Convention had been distributed to all schools in New Zealand. There had also been a poster competition for schoolchildren and, since ratification of the Convention, the winning poster appeared on all official documents in New Zealand relating to the instrument. Copies of the Convention in simple English and in Maori were also available.

9. New Zealand's ratification of the Convention had been the subject of a great deal of controversy, since parents had feared an infringement of their rights. Those fears appeared to have lessened, however, given the Government's emphasis on article 5 of the Convention, which stipulated that States parties should respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents.

10. There were various means of promoting tolerance and understanding in the schools, through, for example, the teaching of social studies, which dealt with subjects such as good neighbourly relations and the promotion of the understanding of different cultures. A document had also been produced by the Ministry of Education with a view to promoting good race relations in the schools. There was, in fact, a wide range of resources available to promote tolerance in the school system, although the decision which resources should be used, was at the discretion of the individual school.

11. Mr. ANGUS (New Zealand), replying to questions concerning the targeted approach to social welfare services, said that New Zealand had traditionally provided universal health care and education for children as well as targeted income-support measures based on needs and funded by fiscal revenue. The aim of recent reforms was to increase the targeted approach; it had not been introduced as an alternative to the type of insurance-based social-security systems used in other countries.

12. Information on the social services available was provided through advertising and modern technology, such as the freephone information service for people on income support. Greater access to social services was ensured by new methods of delivery, including neighbourhood-based "family service centres" and home visiting services.

13. In order to lessen the stigma of resorting to certain services, efforts were constantly being made to improve their quality and emphasis was placed on providing services geared to suit the needs of particular social and ethnic groups. A further initiative was the use of NGOs, which were found to be more acceptable to the general public for the provision of certain social and child-protection services. Services dealing with many of the problems highlighted in the Convention such as child abuse and juvenile delinquency were available to all on the basis of need and were in no way income-related.

14. He had no ready answer concerning the equitable distribution of targeted and universal services. An effort was made in New Zealand to strike a balance between services aimed at protecting children from harm and those dealing with the harm when it arose. A further consideration was of course the balance of expenditure, a question that was constantly under review.

15. Answering questions relating to the absence of an official poverty line, he said that, apart from some individuals in very exceptional circumstances, there was no absolute poverty in New Zealand. There had been much debate on the subject of late, mainly through pressure from NGOs that were in favour of an official poverty line, but no firm conclusions had yet been reached. Data available on the economic circumstances of New Zealand families were taken into account in the policy-development process despite the absence of an official poverty line.

16. The Government had taken a number of steps to address the effects of the economic hardship resulting from recent reforms, by increasing social services expenditure, including income support and rental subsidies. In assessing those hit hardest by the economic reforms and thus most in need of assistance, information relating to household income produced by the New Zealand statistics department had been used the concern voiced by the NGO community had been heeded.

17. The position of his Government regarding the elaboration of a national plan of action for children, in response to the World Summit for Children, remained unchanged; since it considered that the issues concerned were already covered by specific programmes to improve the general welfare of children. Thus, for instance, initiatives in the area of children's health included a national plan of action for nutrition, a campaign to prevent young people from smoking, legislation making it compulsory for children to wear seat belts and a national strategy for the prevention of youth suicide.

18. New legislation on domestic violence had been introduced, which recommended that the impact of violence on children should be taken into account in decisions affecting them, such as in the courts of law. The Government had also launched a policy initiative to strengthen the role of the family, involving a broad spectrum of government agencies and constituting an excellent example of inter-agency coordination. It was based on the idea that the socialization and development of children was the primary responsibility of parents.

19. As part of the policy-development process, a number of goals had been set for the education, health and welfare of children and methods were being devised to monitor progress in attaining those goals. The coalition Government had also decided to allocate considerable resources for services to families with children under the age of eight or children in particular need. Truancy and after-school care were other issues being tackled.

20. A national plan of action would certainly bring such efforts together and the Government's earlier decision in that regard might well be reviewed in the future.

21. A shift in focus from a welfare-oriented approach to one which emphasized children's rights was not currently a matter of particular concern to social workers in New Zealand, who had nevertheless been instrumental in introducing a juvenile justice system paying greater attention to due process than the previous one.

22. He was able to provide figures only for the number of social workers in the Children and Young Persons Service. The additional $11 million made available in the current fiscal year had resulted in the recruitment of some 50 to 60 new social workers, out of a total of about 1,200, and his Government would certainly consider the possibility of allocating more resources to that Service.

23. Children under the age of 10 bore no criminal responsibility. Between the ages of 10 and 13 they could be charged and prosecuted only for murder or manslaughter. If found guilty, they served their sentences in social welfare residences up to the age of 17.

24. Between the ages of 14 and 16 inclusive, children charged with offences were dealt with under a separate jurisdiction, details of which were set out in chapter VIII, section B, of the initial report. Children passing through the youth justice system could be sentenced to a term of up to three months in a residence (the third month commonly being remitted). Those sentenced for serious offences could, in due course, be transferred to the adult system; but no young person could be sentenced to the "preventive detention" (life imprisonment) to which some adult offenders were liable.

25. Mr. LISTER (New Zealand) said that the Committee's comments regarding the possibility of improving coordination of information and data collection were acknowledged in the written response to issue No. 3. Key information would become available with the release of the results of the 1996 five-yearly census in early 1997. As in the past, Statistics New Zealand and the Ministry of Youth Affairs would produce three publications based on the census, dealing respectively with children, families and young people aged 15 to 25 and containing trend data for the 10-15 year period. With the new technology available, it should be possible to produce statistics for children between 0 and 18.

26. One aim of the reforms had been to shift the focus of reporting and evaluation from quantification of human and financial inputs towards outputs and outcomes, a shift that would make the evaluation of accountability and strategic results more comprehensive.

27. A discussion group comprising representatives of all the social agencies and Statistics New Zealand was attempting to improve inter-agency coordination of data and census information. A comprehensive disability survey carried out following the 1996 census would make it possible to identify the percentage of disabled children receiving the services to which they were entitled.

28. There was a new requirement that any policy initiative put to the Cabinet must include funding provisions for monitoring and evaluation. The Ministry of Youth Affairs had included aspects of the Convention such as the best interests of the child in its policy output to the Cabinet Committee

process. Lastly, though it was more specifically responsible for monitoring outcomes for the 12 to 25 age group, the Ministry also engaged in "early prevention" exercises for children aged 0 to 12.

29. New Zealand's rate of youth suicide was one of the highest reported, but it should be realized that, in 1991, the latest year for which figures were available, only 36 out of 166 States Members of the United Nations had reported suicide data. Between 1985 and 1990, the rate among males aged 15 to 24 had doubled and the rate among Maori males appeared to have more than doubled. Since 1990, the rate had stabilized at 120 to 130. More than two thirds of those in the 15 to 24 age group who committed suicide were over 20 years of age.

30. No research had yet been able to pinpoint the causes of youth suicide, hence it was difficult to implement preventive programmes. Risk groups included those who had already attempted suicide, and children with poor parental care and unhappy family circumstances. Sexual abuse and bullying might also be relevant factors and there could be correlations with lack of formal educational qualifications, low incomes, residential mobility, psychiatric disorders, alcohol and drug abuse and antisocial behaviour.

31. It was suspected that Maori youths were more at risk than non-Maoris. Young females were more likely than young males to attempt suicide, but young males were more likely to succeed in the attempt.

32. Though they had not yet become government policy, five focuses for future action had been proposed. They were: improved research into causes; reduction of vulnerability through early prevention and promotion of children's well-being; improved interventions for those exhibiting potentially suicidal behaviour; support for those who had already attempted suicide; and support for those bereaved or affected by suicide.

33. The Human Rights Act protected persons over the age of 16 from discrimination on age grounds, but the Government had been exempted from many of its provisions until 1999. The Consistency 2000 Project was examining all legislation, policies and programmes to ensure consistency with that Act.

34. Regarding the possibility of obtaining better information concerning expenditure on young people, he stressed that the effectiveness of services should not be measured solely on the basis of the amount of money spent. The Ministry of Youth Affairs had just piloted an exercise to encourage government departments to provide information on their allocation of expenditures and outputs to population subgroups aged 12 to 25, an exercise that could be extended to the 0 to 18 age group.

35. The CHAIRPERSON invited the Committee to ask questions about the sections of the report entitled "General principles" and "Civil rights and freedoms".

36. Mrs. EUFEMIO said that the failure to provide for a minimum wage for young people could result in discrimination. She would like to know how youth wages compared with those of adults.

37. With regard to respect for the views of the child, the provision making it mandatory for the Family Court to ascertain the wishes of the child was allegedly of limited effectiveness because the vast majority of custody, access and guardianship cases were resolved by conciliation and because the child had to be represented by counsel, who sometimes made recommendations contrary to the child's express wishes.

38. She would like to know whether the Guardianship Act 1968 had been amended to allow children to apply for access to an absent parent, and to cover situations in which parents or children were unwilling to undertake visits. There was no mandatory requirement for children's views to be heard in property and financial disputes; nor was there any mention of the child's views regarding decisions concerning maintenance in the Child Support Act 1991. The Family Proceedings Act 1980 apparently did not expressly require account to be taken of the child's opinion. Lastly, the Education Act 1989 had been amended to allow boards to dispense with student participation or representation when considering cases of suspension or expulsion.

39. Mrs. SARDENBERG said she would like more detailed information concerning girls in rural areas. Were there disparities between the situations of boys and of girls in matters such as school enrolment and career opportunities? In view of the delegation's earlier comment regarding the age-group with which the Ministry of Youth Affairs was mandated to deal, she asked whether consideration had been given to unifying responsibility for children of all ages under a new Ministry of Children and Youth Affairs.

40. Mr. HAMMARBERG said that the New Zealand Government appeared to have achieved a near-miracle in surmounting a severe economic crisis and improving services in the process. It would be instructive to learn whether, in shaping its future policies, it had been faced with dilemmas other than those it had discussed with the Committee. It was not clear whether any comprehensive assessment had been made of the impact of the years of economic reform on children generally, and on disparities between subgroups within the child population.

41. Every Government would benefit from comparing internationally agreed targets with its own performance. International meetings and agreements should not single out the poorer countries; well-resourced countries such as New Zealand must participate actively in follow-up to such meetings and assist the poorer countries in implementing reforms. It would thus be interesting to learn to what extent New Zealand's overseas aid programme was oriented towards children.

42. He found the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989 interesting in that it went further than the Convention in making the notion of the best interests of the child the first and paramount consideration in decision-making. Did New Zealand apply that concept also in cases where the interests of children as a group might conflict with those of adults or with the national interests?

43. In relation to article 12 of the Convention, he had noted with interest the establishment of a Youth Parliament which could well develop into an important institution. However, it seemed that the provision on the obligatory representation of children on school boards of trustees was no longer in force. He wondered whether any other measures had been introduced in its place.

44. Mr. MOMBESHORA said it was unlikely that New Zealand's new mental health policy would deal fully with the problem of suicide. The underlying causes needed to be fully understood before it would become clear how to deal with that serious problem.

45. Although it seemed that every effort was being made to eliminate discrimination, some of the less obvious areas where discrimination might exist should be considered.

46. Mrs. KARP asked what measures were being taken to deal with discrimination against indigenous peoples, particularly the Maoris, resulting from historical factors and attitudes. That was a particularly relevant question in that there was a feeling that Government policies threatened to integrate the Maoris into the mainstream culture and dilute the characteristics of the Maori way of life. Similarly, she wondered whether the divided opinions on how to approach Maori problems were affecting attempts to make services more accessible to them, and would like to know how Maoris were involved in decisions on the development of health and education services. She also asked whether the Maori population was represented or consulted in the process of devising the conditions service-providers were supposed to meet as services were privatized.

47. It was not completely clear whether the booklet published to disseminate the Convention in the English and Maori languages was for sale or whether it was distributed free of charge to the Maori population. Did it exist in the Pacific Island language?

48. Further clarification would be welcome on training, not just for social workers, but also for other professional groups that worked with children, particularly Maori children.

49. Given the nature of New Zealand society, she asked about the status of the child in the framework of promoting the role of the family, its responsibility and authority and whether the general public accepted the new vision in the Convention of the child as a partner in the family who must be involved in decisions with a direct impact on his or her life. Similarly, were there training programmes to help professionals that worked with children to understand the new concept of child participation?

50. Mrs. BADRAN said that there was usually more than one variable that contributed to a person wishing to commit suicide. From the number of cases in New Zealand, it should be possible to isolate the most significant contributory factors.

51. She asked whether, with the introduction of private schools, a two-tier system would arise, to the benefit of children whose families could afford to take them out of the State education system, and if so, how that would affect a child's choices, particularly in terms of employment.

52. Although the Youth Parliament was a commendable concept, it was not clear whether it was merely a temporary exercise or whether there were other permanent mechanisms to ensure that children were given the opportunity to taste democracy and participate in matters that affected them. Further information on other areas where children's participation was assured, in political parties for example, should be provided.

53. Miss MASON said that, under the Convention, a child had the right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. That concept covered not only a child's treatment at the hands of an adult but also one child's treatment of another. Bullying - which appeared to be a major concern in New Zealand - should be considered from that angle. Children tended to learn more rapidly and easily from their peers and there was much to be said for finding ways of bringing peer pressure to bear to stamp out bullying and promote mutual respect among children. It would be interesting to know if the research into bullying had been informative and had led to any practical measures that could be used in the New Zealand schools.

The meeting was suspended at 4.45 p.m. and resumed at 5 p.m.

54. Ms. GIBSON (New Zealand) thanked the members of the Committee for their valuable contributions on the subject of suicide. More time was needed to be able to answer several of the questions raised during the debate, particularly those relating to aspects of legislation.

55. Te Puni Kokiri (Ministry of Maori Development) consistently consulted with the Maori population on policy questions.

56. A review of the careers service had looked into how much information was available in schools to help young persons make informed career choices. It had also shown that young persons in rural areas felt that they were well catered for in terms of being able to make choices on further education and training.

57. Although it was no longer compulsory for schools to include a student representative on their board of trustees, most educational establishments had chosen to continue the practice of their own accord.

58. Mr. ANGUS (New Zealand) said that there was no problem concerning social-worker coverage of rural areas.

59. There had been no intention to imply that the Government reduction in expenditure as part of its efforts to meet fiscal and legislative goals had not had an adverse effect on sectors of society. The Government had had to address the problem and was dealing with it as part of its ongoing concern over the situation of children. Long-term studies had been carried out into

the effects on children of disrupted family structures, a family's long-term dependency on income support and other social ills, and the information was being used as a focus for action.

60. There were no comprehensive studies on economic reform and its impact on children. However, reports on the impact of policies on children would be produced to cover areas of relevance to the rights of the child, though they would not necessarily cover all economic and social policy initiatives.

61. New Zealand's Official Development Assistance (ODA) was targeted towards promoting sustainable economic and social progress and justice by improving the ability of developing countries to raise and sustain living standards, including those of their children. New Zealand also funded special education projects and did its best to encourage voluntary contributions to international development and humanitarian agencies whose spheres of activity related to children.

62. The paramountcy of the interests of the child, which was set out in the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989, was applied on a case-by-case basis.

63. As for the questions raised by Mrs. Karp, it was the experience of social workers that a child could not be considered in isolation from his or her family. That had been one of the underlying premises of the Children, Young Persons and Their Family Act. The interests of the child as a participating member of a family were important in any decisions on placement, custody, care and protection, for example. The safeguards that needed to be in place to underpin the paramountcy of the child had been strengthened by amendments to New Zealand's legislation.

64. Family members were educated regarding the participation of children in the framework of general parent-support initiatives financed and promoted by the Government. They emphasized the right of the child to live free from violence and the role parents could play in encouraging the child's development.

65. As for training professional workers in the concept of the child as a partner, he said that the child was seen as part of a family and involved in family decision-making. Professionals working with children still had room for improvement in terms of finding a balance between the wishes of the child and what they thought to be the best solution.

66. Mr. LISTER (New Zealand) said that there was a minimum wage rate for young persons aged between 16 and 19. The Government intended to review the minimum age rate for persons under 20 years of age.

67. In the Guardianship Act 1968, for example, the best interests of the child were paramount, as they were in the Adoption Act 1995.

68. Programmes to stamp out bullying were available for the schools. There was no information on how widespread the programmes involving young people to convince their peers of the ills of bullying were, but they certainly did exist.

69. Ms. GIBSON (New Zealand) said that the booklet she had shown to the Committee was an example of a resource for the promotion of tolerance. It had been produced jointly by the Office of the Race Relations Conciliator and the Ministries of Education and Maori Development as a tool for the promotion of a climate of tolerance between races. It was not concerned with bullying as such.

70. In her answer regarding peer pressure, she had referred to a video produced by the police and other agencies to encourage the attitude that bullying was not acceptable. A range of such resources was available to persons in a position to influence behaviour in schools. They were used in discussions where children could learn from the comments by their peers. A number of peer-support programmes were operating in the schools, but they were not compulsory.

71. The Government did not intend to privatize the education system. There were only about 150 truly private schools in New Zealand out of a total of some 3,000. There were many "integrated schools" - a system which allowed parents to send their children to one of a range of State schools at a low cost. A programme had been introduced under which children could apply for free places in private schools, following a United States model intended largely for black children. Official education standards in New Zealand were the same for all types of school.

72. The Youth Parliament had not yet been established on a regular basis. The first had been held in 1994 and had been so successful that the Government had decided to make it a triennial event. The level of enthusiasm was overwhelming. The intention was to allow as many children as possible to participate in activities connected with the Parliament. At the local level, children elected their representatives to attend Parliament for a two-day session in which the parliamentary press gallery and young journalists were involved. The Government was looking at ways of promoting the Convention through the Youth Parliament. It was envisaged that schools would be able to use Youth Parliament materials in their programmes.

73. Mr. LISTER (New Zealand), said that there was one piece of research on child suicide: the profiling of 129 young people who had tried to kill themselves. There was also a proposal for a larger study of a group of young people hospitalized as a result of suicide attempts.

74. Mrs. KARP, reverting to her question about the status of children in the family, said that the philosophy of the Convention was that the family provided the best environment for raising children and that the family bore the primary responsibility in that regard. What she had wanted to know was whether a child was considered more as a family member needing protection and care than as a member with a separate identity. She also wanted to know how New Zealand ensured that the best interests of the child were a primary consideration in the event of conflict between children and parents. It seemed, for example, that children were not separately represented in the family group conferences referred to in the written replies.

75. Mr. KOLOSOV said that he was glad to hear that the Youth Parliament was to be held every three years. However, there was a poorer country that held such a parliament on an annual basis and maintained local committees in constant session. Perhaps the next New Zealand delegation to the Committee might include some members of the Youth Parliament.

76. With regard to the right to receive and impart information, he noted that New Zealand was located in a remote corner of the world and that not many New Zealand children travelled as tourists in, for example, Europe. In the circumstances, he would like to know what was being done to acquaint children with different cultures.

77. Mr. HAMMARBERG said that he welcomed the information concerning the prohibition of the production or possession of pornographic materials involving children. He wondered, however, whether the New Zealand system of classifying pornography into several categories was easy to apply, for example, to video shops. The New Zealand measures were mainly of the censorship type, which did not always provide a full answer to the problem. Other strategies might be needed, including the education of children and parents in the proper use of the mass media: the lack of parental supervision of television watching, seemed a major problem. Had New Zealand tried to develop a comprehensive strategy to cope with violence and pornography in the media?

78. While it was good that corporal punishment was banned in all schools, the worst abuse often took place in the family. Compliance with article 19 of the Convention so as to prevent all forms of abuse would, however, require some very strong legislation. New Zealand legislation allowed a degree of violence regarded as reasonable in the circumstances. The risk of that approach was that it was arbitrary and introduced the notion that violence against children might be permissible in some situations. The Committee, which understood that the Commissioner for Children had requested a review of the legislation to bring New Zealand into line with the countries that had decided that violence against children was not permitted in any circumstances, felt it essential that there should be strong legislation in line with article 19.

79. Mrs. SARDENBERG said that, while she was grateful for the answer about girls and discrimination, she would like to know whether there were any separate data on Maori girls which indicated an equally positive picture. She would also welcome more information about the participation of children, particularly in the Board of Trustees of their school when suspension was under discussion. It seemed that the Education Act had originally provided for such participation which had been terminated by an amendment. She would also like to know why the Office of the Race Relations Conciliator had been established and what its mandate was. Was the problem one of racial tensions in the schools or in society at large?

80. Miss MASON said that the drafters of the Convention had made the best interests of the child "a" rather than "the" primary consideration because they recognized that there might be circumstances in which it was not the only consideration. However, they had clearly believed that the care and protection of the child should be given priority wherever possible. She

referred, that in connection, to the New Zealand arrangements for the imprisonment of children with their convicted mothers. She presumed that those arrangements were regarded as being in the best interests of the child on the basis that it was better for younger children to live in prison with their mothers than in the care of strangers, but would like to know what criteria were used.

81. Incest, like child suicide, appeared to be a taboo subject in New Zealand society. It would be helpful to know what its incidence was and whether any research had been carried out into the subject, in particular concerning what subsequently happened to the child victims. It had been suggested that most prostitutes had been involved in childhood incestuous relationships.

82. She would also like to know how New Zealand ensured that the child victims of sexual abuse were protected against further incidents, especially in view of the statement in paragraph 386 of the report that there was some shortage of appropriate services. Would it be possible to revive the apparently defunct compensation scheme for victims of sexual abuse and, if so, how would the authorities decide who should be compensated? Were the payments to be regarded as compensation for the harm done or as pay-outs for failure to prosecute the offenders? In particular, she would welcome information on the extent to which the child victims of sexual abuse were brought into any discussions on compensation.

83. Ms. GIBSON (New Zealand) said that she would bring Mr. Kolosov's suggestion about the Youth Parliament to the attention of the authorities, but she was not sure that they would allow an even larger delegation in the future. New Zealanders did, in fact, travel a great deal, both in a spirit of exploration and because most of them had roots elsewhere. One of the main thrusts of the social studies in schools was that children should acquire an understanding of different peoples and cultures in the wider world with a view to promoting tolerance of others. The seven essential learning areas described in paragraph 309 of the report helped to build the appropriate attitudes in children.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.